Oodoville September 9 1835.

Dear Brethren,

No student can pass through a theological Seminary without frequently agitating the question should I go to the heathen.

Sympathising with you from experience in your perplexity, and deeply feeling the responsibilities involved in your decision, we wish to do what we can to aid you in ascertaining the path of duty.

But first we intreat you, in view of the influence your decision may have on your future peace of conscience, on souls thro' eternity, and as an example to others who may pursue the same inquiry with yourselves, to have your mind free from the bias of personal feeling, social attachments, love of ease, enjoyment and human applause, and open to the direction of the word, Spirit and providence of God. For you might as well banish the inquiry as to engage in it ~~without~~ without this preparation. The guilt of neglecting it would scarcely be greater than that of darkening by prepossessions the light which investigation would afford, nor the liability to mistake greater in pursuing the course to which inclination might lead without inquiry than in bringing to the inquiry a mind under the influence of such prepossessions.

We shall not in this communication dwell upon the last command of Christ to his Apostles. As an abstract truth it is admitted by the church & the ministry, by those who stay at home as well as by those who go abroad, that the gospel ought to be conveyed to the heathen, and that the foundation of this obligation is the command of the Saviour.

The great difficulty with those who sincerely inquire in what part of the world they can most glorify God in the salvation of souls, is properly to estimate the claims of one's own country and those of the heathen world.

By such as advocate the superior claims of their own country it is urged that we are required to attend to its wants. We are told to look at the intemperance, licentiousness, profanation of the sabbath, slavery, infidelity, Romanism and other errors and crimes which abound in view of these, it is asked ought we leave such a field, and go to the heathen? That there is ignorance, in our native land that there is much heaven-daring wickedness; that multitudes reject the gospel and for this rejection will receive a more awful condemnation we admit.

But are not the claims of 500,000,000 pagans totally ignorant of the only name by which they can be saved, as strong as those of a comparatively small number in our own

country who have heard of his name from their childhood? Must these miserable idolaters drop into hell for the want of that Gospel which you are able to bear to them, but from which service you would excuse yourselves in order that you may aid the many who are engaged in building up Zion at home?

We do not mean to advocate the sentiment that every pastor should leave his church. The dictates of reason, and the principles of the gospel, require that churches which have been gathered should be sustained. We believe the ministry was instituted partly "for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ." And therefore we would not do any thing to frustrate this design. But it was instituted also for the conversion of sinners. And in pleading for the heathen all we maintain is that as souls in heathen lands are as precious as souls in Christian lands, and as those about you have often heard the Gospel while 500 000 000 have never heard, a much greater proportion of you should go to the heathen than now do. We ask only for a due proportion for the heathen. What that proportion should be we will not decide. But if you will take a map of the world, and look at the vast extent of country enveloped in darkness and the millions who are on their way to eternity without one ray of light to guide them, and then cast your eye upon that little spot where you live, and see how many laborers are employed there, we think you will agree with us that our country has more than her proportion. The whole number of American Missionaries among the heathen is not more than 200, while in U. S. A. in a population of 14 000 000 there are, of all Evangelical denominations, between 11 & 12 000 settled pastors.

Is this a proper proportion? In many parts of our country, particularly in New England, Ministers are settled very near each other. If the churches were willing to submit to the inconvenience & self denial, they might by travelling a short distance enjoy the regular preaching of the gospel, and thus be able to supply the destitute with a Pastor.

Christians have not yet done what they can in the way of self denial, & when such an emergency as supplying the world with the living Ministry is presented, should not some such experiment as the above mentioned be tried?

In many places too, there are three or four evangelical churches seperated only by a difference of opinion on some minute point of doctrine or mode of government, which if they would unite in harmony & love could very well

be watched over and guided by one Pastor.

In order that you may correctly estimate the disproportion between the supply of our country and that of the heathen world you must bear in mind that Christianity has obtained an ascendency there, and that there are thousands of talented, enterprising, devoted christians to add the pastor, while a Missionary to the heathen labours in the heart of the enemy's territory almost alone.

The private members of the churches are capable, without encroaching on the appropriate duties of the ministry, of taking a more public and active part in building up the kingdom of Christ, than they do.# and may it not be an inquiry worthy of consideration, whether those pastors who are so thickly settled should not leave their churches a part of the time and travel more among the destitute? In this way private Christians would feel more their responsibilities and more ministers be spared for the heathen.

But further, does not experience prove that the way to increase domestic Missions is to promote foreign Missions? Add have not young men entered the ministry in greater number since some began to go to the heathen than before? Do you know that if half of the theological students in our land should go to make known "Jesus and the resurrection" to the heathen, the Holy Spirit would not the very next year convert every impenitent sinner in our Colleges and High Schools, and make keep in their souls a burning desire to preach the gospel? Do you know that the fact of the Church & the ministry's disobeying the command of Christ and neglecting the heathen, is not one reason why the power of the gospel is so little felt, the influences of the Spirit enjoyed to so limited an extent, and young men of talent enter other professions, who otherwise would enter the Ministry? "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven & pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Let us do our duty. The command of Christ to furnish the heathen with the gospel is binding upon us. If we obey this command, he will take care of his cause at home. He will not allow it to suffer in one place, if obedience to his command requires us to direct our efforts to another part of the world.

We say nothing of the cruelties of the heathen

Did not the private Christians who were scattered abroad by the persecution which arose about Steven go every where preaching the word

many have told of the burning of widows, the self torture, the human sacrifice, thus presenting a stimulus to human sympathy which has failed on heathen ground. Such a result is what might be expected when a man goes forth with what he thinks a "passion for missions," kindled by representations to his animal feelings, rather than by motives presented to his faith as a Christian. For while no heathen country presents to the senses such an amount of cruelty & suffering as may be condensed before the imagination from the wide world's darkest recesses, others are comparatively free from them. These temporal sufferings weigh scarcely an atom in the scale of motive for carrying them the gospel. Were they as moral and amiable as Plato or Seneca, the obligation would remain the same.

We would rather entreat you to contemplate their condition as ignorant of Christ, and to look with faith at the scenes which God's word depicts. We would have you look at the soul made in the image of God rescued from the unutterable agonies of the second death through the blood of Jesus purified from sin & in unison with angels and archangels, principalities & powers with a multitude no man can number, swelling the song of redemption to Him that sits upon the throne for ever and ever. It was this view that brought the Lord from heaven and made him say "as my father hath sent me, even so send I you." Go ye unto all the world & preach the gospel to every creature. This stimulus will last till eternal scenes open before you.

It is becoming a favorite idea at home that the world will be converted in twenty or thirty years. But, though it may be true in itself, we have reason to fear it is expressed with too little consideration of the greatness of the work & the intensity & unity of effort indispensable to its accomplishment.

What is the fact with regard to India? The sentiment has lately been published to the world by high authority & echoed by another high authority, that "idolatry is too long to be the prevailing religion of India."

On what this opinion is built we do not know. If it be the promises of God that Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, & that the world shall be filled with the knowledge and glory of God and if the anticipated

shortness of the reign of idolatry be viewed in contrast with the years that have elapsed, we see no difficulty in admitting the sentiment. Even the Apostles, 1800 years since, might have said as much. But much as has been done, and bright as are the promises, we are constrained to believe many, many long dark years will roll ere the systems of idolatry in India are subverted, unless the prayers and contributions and efforts of christians are very much increased, and young men go forth in greater numbers to the work.

The world will not be full of the glory of the Lord until it is full of his knowledge.

What are the indications of the speedy dissolution of the systems of idolatry in India?

Let us look at Jaffna. In this District there are nearly 200000 souls. Missionary labour has been performed here for 20 years. The scriptures & religious Tracts have been circulated and many of the people have heard of salvation through Jesus Christ. But of these a very great number have only just heard of the Saviour. A large proportion have no Missionary among them, and what religious knowledge they have has been obtained from schools. Tracts distributed and a few words spoken from time to time by Missionaries and native christians. But, to one who has seen heathenism and investigated its nature, it is very clear that the system will be but little affected by these efforts, without the uninterrupted and long continued labours of the living preacher. One reason is, that the Bible and Tracts are but very partially understood. What did the Ethiopean know though the Queens right hand man, and knew so much as to go to Jerusalem for the express purpose of worshipping. How could he know except some man should guide him. Suppose a heathen sits down to read the Bible not having heard the living teacher. God in his mind is Siva. Jesus Christ is "some strange God." #. A new birth transmigration #. heaven absorption in the deity. hell, unavoidable sufferings, and piety a round of ceremonies.

What then is the real condition of Jaffna, where comparatively much labour has been bestowed? Out of these 200000 3 or 400 have been hopefully converted, & 8 or 10000 have been, and are now under religious instruction. But what is the actual influence of christianity upon the adult population of Jaffna? Alas heathenism

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The very same word being used in our translation of the word new birth which they use for transmigration, & in so many other cases

has still a most powerful hold and they have hardly begun to admit the gospel into their minds. A Traveller would hardly see an impression made a spirit of inquiry has gone abroad, many are willing to receive & read tracts & the scriptures. It is true also that some have but little principled adherence to heathenism. But take them as a mass they are stone idolaters and despisers of the crucified one.

We would not be understood to speak discouragingly. No brethren, we are more & more encouraged in our labours. But we think the sentiment that idolatry is not long to prevail in India calculated to do injury by making christians feel that the work is nearly done, and by causing men that they may as well remain at home as come here. Whereas the work is but just begun, even in Jaffna. And if idolatry is still so deeply & firmly rooted there, notwithstanding so much time and labour have been expended, what must it be on the continent where, with the exception of a few districts, almost nothing has been done. And how many Missionaries must labour there 20 years before such an unqualified remark could be applicable?

Look then, dear brethren, at 500 000 000 of vile degraded idolaters. Behold them held in the most abject superstition and ignorance by bigoted, selfish, tyrannical priests who will dispute with you every inch of ground. Think of them as hastening to the Judgment without a knowledge of Christ. Think of the great mass of idolaters within the reach of the church as sinking to hell and bearing the wrath of God forever. Then fall upon your knees and ask Lord where wilt thou have me to go?

There is another reason why you ought to come to the heathen rather than remain at home, which has of late deeply with much force on our minds. It is the rapidity with the Church is waking up to supply the world with Bibles and Tracts. We hear the A.T. Soc have resolved to furnish $30 000 for foreign and Pagan lands the present year. We hear the A.B. Soc have discussed the subject of supplying the world in a definite time with the word of God. The Church is pouring forth her treasures with a liberality hitherto unprecedented, to extend the Redeemers kingdom.

But what are money, presses, books, if prayer in the closet be neglected alone? Will money collect the children into schools and instruct them? Will presses cry aloud and spare not, lift up the voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgression? Will Bible distributors thunder from house to house and rouse the people to hearken to their message? Where are the

men to do the work? When we call to mind the manner in which we know the Scriptures and Tracts have been disposed of, when we consider the natural stupidity and blindness of the heathen on religious subjects, and when we remember that it is by the foolishness of preaching that men are converted, we confess we are increasingly impressed with the belief that the Scriptures and Religious Tracts will as a general thing fail of producing the desired effect, unless accompanied by the efforts of the Missionary.

The preaching of the cross is unto those who are saved the power of God. The animated voice, the earnest look, the impressive gesture, the eye beaming with sincerity and kindness are necessary to arrest the mind & to remove every cavil and doubt, the living epistle known and read of all in the example moulded according to the precept. We do not say Bibles and Tracts distributed have not been read and blessed to the salvation of souls where there has been no missionary. Neither would we repress the zeal of the Church and the energy of the B. & T. Soc. We cannot however but think that when the Churches who are so liberally imparting their substance to supply the world with the word of Life, come to see what little success has followed, they will not find the anticipations they had formed of their success realized.

But the principle use we wish to make of the comparative inefficacy of more Bibles & Tracts among the heathen is to urge upon you the duty of devoting your life to this work. Suppose we should send to the Churches the following statement. In consequence of your increased liberality, we are exceedingly pressed with our labours in preparing the Scriptures & Tracts, & for the want of men to do the work, these presses cannot be sustained — we are not strong handed enough to prepare Tracts and translate the scriptures to the extent your donations require — we cannot keep pace with you. Would not the reading of such a statement, dear brethren, thrill your heart with longing desire to go and contribute your aid?

In vain will money be given, in vain presses sent out, unless men go come to write Tracts, translate the Scriptures, and call the attention of the people to their contents.

But again, our hopes are with the rising generation. Children must be brought into schools and trained in the principles of Christianity, before heathenism

has reverted to chasing upon their minds and heart. Who is to do this If schools are to be established, it must be done by the Missionary; if sustained, the Missionary must be on the ground to superintend them; if the children have books the Missionary must write and put them to the press.—

Schools at home can be sustained by Laymen; but among the heathen there are none of this character. To whom then can the children look but to those preparing for the Ministry; & to what higher service can you aspire on earth than to that which may justly claim for you the appellation of the heathen's children's Pastor?

We must then dear brethren urge upon you this subject. Let not the Church which has so long slumbered wake in vain— let her not project missions ~~& contribute~~ and contribute money and then find there is no one to go into the field & work— let not the rising generation grow up in ignorance of a saviours and become like their fathers the dupes of artful priests, and the captives of the devil; and let not the millions of adults go down to hell without the offer of salvation from your lips.—

Oh my brethren, as you value the perishing soul as you regard the saviours commands, and as you expect soon to render to Him your account, take this subject into prayerful consideration, and give yourselves no rest until you can say from your inmost soul, the church shall not wake & project her plans in vain. Here are we, send us.

In behalf of the Mission

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel

Samuel Hutchings

Cod, near ... Jodonville Sep. 17. 1835

My dear Brethren,

I have long desired to write to the "Soc. of Inquiry" with which I have spent many happy hours, but have been so pressed with duties of one kind & another since my arrival in this heathen land that I have neglected it. I have however at last finished a letter wh. I hope and pray may be blessed by the Great Head of the church.

The last part is deemed very important by our Mission, and we hope you will take it into serious and prayerful consideration.

May the Lord guide you into the path of duty. I have no doubt many, very many of you ought to go to the heathen, and will go if you divest your minds of all selfish and personal feelings, and inquire with perfect sincerity and diligence where the Lord will have you labour.

I shd like to have your Soc. discuss the question "how far the church & the ministry are acting in reference to the conversion of the world upon Apostolical principles." When the apostles planted a church, did they remain there preaching the Gospel year after year to sinners? They appointed one from their own number to take care of the church, selecting the best they could find, and ordained him as Pastor.

They did not wait till he had completed a collegiate & Theol. Education before they ordained them. Not that a learned ministry is to be dispensed with, but may it not be a question whether

hundreds & thousands of men, young men, and men of middle age, shd. not in view of the exigencies of the case be ordained (for there are very many who have sufficient talent & learning to make them apt to teach) and sent forth to the heathen — or when a new church is formed at home, whether some one of their own number shd. not be chosen and ordained over them and one or more young men be spared for the heathen.

Another question. Tho' Paul organized churches and appointed pastors, did he not lay all his plans so that the "gospel was preached to every creature under heaven" before he died? If this be so, then the argument drawn from the necessity of taking care of the churches at home, against many going to the heathen will not hold, for might not Paul have offered the same plea? Will you stay at home, and see that the gospel is preached to every creature before you die? Perhaps you will say every creature does not mean every creature. Does not "every creature under heaven" mean every creature? Will you "interpret", and let me know what it does mean?

Will it not be admitted that according to Acts 4:it. the gospel was preached to many nations before the Apostle died? And if any one open to this passage, and then compare it with Mark 16:15, will he not conclude that the apostle meant to say that he had preached the gospel as extensively as he understood the command of Xt. to extend? How extensive was that? Undoubtedly this: that the Roman world. Can it be proved that the gospel was

was not preached in every part of the Roman world so that every creature had heard of Xt. before the Apos. Paul died?

The substance of what I should like to have you discuss, may be stated in a few questions.

1. Is the church now acting as apostolic principles dictate to the conversion of the world? if not what reasons can be given for acting on different principles?
2. What is the meaning of Col. I. 23 – every creature
3. Can it be proved that the apostles did not fully obey the last command of Xt. so far as the world was known to them, beyond wh. of course their obligations did not extend.
4. Is not that command "Go ye &c" as binding now upon the church, as it was upon the apostles, to make Rome the gospel to every creature within their reach?
5. [redacted]e apostles considered themselves under obligation to preach the Gospel to every creature before they died and did do it, then is not every Thess. Student under obligation to see that the gospel is conveyed to every creature before he dies?
6. If one soul dies without hearing of Xt. have you done all you ought to save that soul?
7. What is the meaning of "This gospel must first be preached in all the world as a witness – particularly the force of the word witness?

These questions I put without giving any opinion myself, partly to stir up your own thoughts, and partly that you may aid me. Much may be said on some of them. If you write, write to me

a private one. If you do not the Letter, you can write to the Miss. directed to me. We shd. be happy to hear from you.

I have put the no. of the Mss. at 200. I do not know whether that is correct - if not will you correct it. If you think any of the Letters worth publishing, and calculated to do good to other Theo. Students in the church, you are at liberty to publish - not however any of my private & confidential Letters.

Yours in the gospel L. Hutchings

Rev. Leonard Woods D.D.
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